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AUTHOR Paddock, Susan C.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

Schools are often reluctant to be watched or studied, especially when their interests do not coincide with those of researchers. The development of good site relations can improve the chances of successful data gathering in such circumstances. In addition to acting with courtesy and respect, research teams can organize their site relations activities into four phases, including planning, development, maintenance, and dissemination. In the planning phase, a field coordinator is selected to oversee the site relations program. In the development phase, an overall plan of site relations is fashioned. Drafts of cooperative agreements with participating schools are composed. In this phase, a strategy is devised for eliciting sponsorship by large or well known research development agencies, who are capable of securing invitations by schools to allow researchers to present their proposals and secure approval to conduct research. The maintenance phase is the period of actual data collection. Field representatives work closely with site personnel to avoid unforeseen changes or problems. During this phase site visits are scheduled to promote personal contact, to gain valuable information not readily apparent in written data, and to secure feedback. Final reports to participants are composed in the dissemination phase. (JEH)

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ON THE CONDUCT OF SITE RELATIONS IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Susan C. Paddock, Arizona State University

John S. Packard, University of Oregon

Richard Moser, Clayton Public Schools

March, 1978

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ON THE CONDUCT OF SITE RELATIONS IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Susan C. Paddock, Arizona State University
John S. Packard, University of Oregon
Richard Moser, Clayton Public Schools

Our goal in preparing this paper is to stimulate open discussion and debate about procedures and issues in site relations in educational research. To do this we shall describe the site relations program used in an educational research project of which we were members. In this description we shall raise some of the issues we faced. Our motivations for calling attention to site relations in educational research are two-fold. Others may profit from an account of our efforts. We stand to gain by learning about the activities in which other researchers, by necessity, have engaged.

It is our distinct impression that the topic of site relations is systematically excluded from discussion among educational researchers. By the term site relations, we mean the manner in which a research project or researcher engages schools and school personnel to participate as research subjects. By engages, we mean how the research team gains and maintains the willing participation of subjects so that it is possible to complete the project in the originally intended manner. When we say that this topic is systematically excluded from discussion, we mean that we can find but fleeting references to the issues, problems and logistics of site relations in courses or textbooks in educational research. We find that few of our colleagues seem to regard site relations as a topic worthy of discussion. We find that in contrast to the careful attention given to literature reviews, research design, techniques of measurement, data collection and data analysis, little attention is devoted to evaluating the site relations aspects of research proposals whether they be intra- or extramural.

In order to make such observations one would have to be interested in knowing about site relation. Such has been our keen interest for the last five years. In 1973 our research team at the Center for Educational Policy and Management was awarded an NIE contract for a longitudinal research project. The research goals were to be served by enlisting the cooperation of approximately 40 elementary schools to act as sites for a period of three years. We planned to employ a variety of measures, questionnaires, interviews and logs, seven times over this three year period. We knew it would take about two weeks to complete each round of data collection. We depended on the participation of each teacher and administrator. Our study was designed to establish the empirical relationships among such variables as collegial decision making, teacher task interdependence, patterns of teacher communication, managerial structure and various aspects of teacher affect. Well into the project we began to worry about eliciting and maintaining the cooperation of the requisite number of schools, administrators and teachers.

Our field problems seemed overwhelming. Schools are wary of being watched, even for short periods of time. The concepts of interest to us did not appear to be central to the thinking of most public school educators. We hoped to advance theory and, perhaps also, influence educational policy in a modest way. The participants would gain no direct benefit during or after the project's duration. Furthermore, the design required that we include both experimental and control schools; the former would be characterized by a special type of organization change, the latter hopefully would not adopt a

major innovation during the course of our observations. We could not and did not want to determine which schools would be the experimental and which would be the controls. Rather, we had to find "naturally occurring" experimental schools; those who already planned to install the innovation shortly after we had completed at least one data collection. The control schools would have no visible plans for change. Our interests were not to determine which of these two types of schools was superior, but to determine if they differed in any of the dimensions we regarded as critical. We learned very quickly that teachers could not accept our claims of pedagogical neutrality. They were reluctant to suffer from envidious, if not predetermined, comparisons.

Much of the folklore among educational researchers suggested that under such circumstances our project should have failed. Certainly these circumstances did not seem to us to bode well for moving the project into the field. Thus, we turned to various standard sources of aid and assistance, including two senior colleagues who had had long and esteemed careers in survey research. We found a dearth of useful, practical information to give us confidence in setting our directions.

Somehow we survived. The project, save editorial details concerning the final report, is complete. Due to an abbreviation of our federal contract, only five rounds of data were taken over a two year period. Thirty-eight elementary schools remained in the sample for the full period; the school closest to project headquarters was located some 2000 miles to the east. Yet at each round the rate of return exceeded 90%; the modal rate was 100%. We judge the data to be of good quality and relatively unaffected

by the attitudes of the participants about our project. Obviously we did not fail to implement the research plan.

But we are curious; how do we explain our apparent success? In lieu of confirmatory data we are tempted to attribute our good fortune to our site relations efforts. Obviously we are unable to speak with certainty about the effects of our site relations activities on our ability to collect somewhat obscure data repeatedly in 38 distant elementary schools. We wonder if such an opportunity were to arise again, which if any, of our site relations activities would we employ? Which site relations costs were needless? Which of our worries, doubts and fears were misplaced? In preparing this account of our venture, we hope to profit from the reactions of our colleagues and to stimulate broader discussion of this little discussed, but necessary, component of all field studies in education.

We are not confident that our goals can be reached. Recent experiences have supported our contention that site relations is not an engaging topic for educational researchers. For example, our recent AERA "round table" discussion of site relations was attended by two persons. Nevertheless, we are convinced of the merits of articulating the unarticulated process of site relations in educational research. (This topic has received considerable attention in other fields--see, for example, Scott, 1969.)

General Considerations

Dawes (1972), we think, has stated the most useful rule of thumb regarding the relationship between subjects and researchers. He suggests that researchers should treat subjects as if the situation was altogether ordinary. Although

we did not have Dawes' statement before us at the time; in retrospect, it is fair to say that we attempted to act as if we were tentatively invited guests in the schools we studied. This attitude helped guide the more explicit formal strategies that we pursued. In simple terms, placing the research in the context of everyday norms of social intercourse meant we attempted to be courteous, non-offensive, understay our welcome, appeal to the most cordial nature of our hosts, and hope for another invitation.

However, the situation in which we had placed ourselves did not permit the gradual, natural emergence of friendships that might otherwise bring parties into a close relationship. We had to follow the protocol that governs meetings between representatives of formal organizations. Moreover, the stakes were high enough to make us persist in a relationship when norms of social intercourse might have otherwise dictated strategic retreat. The sample had to be highly specialized with regard to its history in order that the project might fulfill its research goals. Project staff and the federal agency had invested considerable time, money and effort against the contingency that an appropriate sample might be induced to participate.

Thus, within the project rather conscious, specific efforts were made to enact a site relations program. To discuss this, we find it helpful to imagine that site relations consists of four highly interdependent but functionally and symbolically different phases. We call these planning, development, maintenance, and dissemination.

Planning

Among the first specific steps taken in the name of site relations was to hire a person whose prime responsibility was oversight of the site relations program. This person was given the title field activities coordinator. When he joined our staff only a scant eight months remained until the first scheduled data collection. At this time we had only the most abstract notion about the location of potential sites, and had only a general idea about how sites might be acquired. Much of what will be reported hereafter, then, is a record of his ingenuity and leadership.

We should point out that the position of field activities coordinator was a source of discomfort and ambiguity that reveals much about the status of site relations in educational research. Site relations, we are convinced, is probably the most underdeveloped and misunderstood element of a research undertaking. Site relations is something researchers often do "with their left hand", while they go about the more important intellectual research tasks. Schools are often badly treated as a result (Baldridge, Deal, et al, 1973). Also, as a consequence, few persons are trained in techniques of site relations--as evidenced by the credentials of the large number of candidates that applied for the position now being discussed.

Furthermore, there is no language or status readily available that allows a site relations specialist to explain to those outside the project what he or she is doing or for others to evaluate the worth of the specialist to the organization. Our field activities coordinator experienced some apprehension about how others in our Center judged his efforts. These sorts of

worries may have led, in part, to his accepting another position prior to the end of the project.

Development

In the frantic months preceeding the initial data collection various site relations activities and events occurred. Among the first of these was to fashion an overall plan of site relations. We attempted to project forward to the maintenance and dissemination phases, in order that in the development phase we might give schools an accurate account of future events. We prepared drafts of cooperative agreements that would be signed by the schools and research project. We established the limits of the financial, symbolic, and information compensation that we could afford to give schools for their time and effort. These plans were to crystallize later as we became increasingly more knowledgeable about the schools that might comprise the sample.

The path by which schools were located, contacted and entreated to participate was circuitious and expensive to travel. Without going into the mundane details, we shall characterize our major strategy of site development as sponsorship. By sponsorship, we mean that we attempted to win the acceptance of ever more proximal agencies and agents so that when we arrived at the doorstep of a school, we and our purposes for coming would be known. Through sponsorship we hoped, even, to be invited to make our pitch for participation.

Sponsorship was necessitated, in part, by the structure by which the innovation was brought to schools and in part, also, by courtship rituals that occur between formal organizations.

To explain, the innovation, team organization, that we wished to study was part of a package of educational reforms that was (and still is) actively promoted by two large educational R & D organizations. These organizations were reliable sources of information about the location of schools that would attempt to install the team organization. Moreover, these organizations held certain powers over our inspection of their product. Whereas they could not instruct any school to comply with our wishes, they could permit access to their files and provide assistance in getting to know about the schools in the first place. We suspect that had we made a poor impression at this step our research plans could not have been implemented.

Sponsorship by the national headquarters of these organizations led to contacts with their field agents. These individuals promoted the innovation in various regions throughout the country. In many respects the field agents held the key to our introduction to the potential sites. By making a favorable impression on them, we gained two advantages. First, we learned which of the potential sites were most likely to proceed with the innovation on a schedule compatible with our research plans. Second, through these field agents, we were introduced to the representatives of the schools we most earnestly sought to include in the project.

At times sponsorship by a field agent led to an introduction with a school district administrator--at other times. it resulted in direct contact

with a potential site. On these occasions, we were able to give a fairly detailed description of the schedule of research activities, the non-evaluative nature of our project, and the modest rewards that might accrue through participation in the study. Often these presentations were made to the entire faculty of a school, and then repeated for the benefit of the school superintendent or school board. A rather elaborate set of materials had been prepared for these sessions. These included a comic-book style report of the project, a slide-tape show about the University of Oregon and the Center for Educational Policy and Mangement, and information about the personalities on the research staff.

Eventually, we were able to sign cooperative agreements with the requisite number of "experimental" schools. The final act of sponsorship occurred when the experimental schools introduced us to the control schools, often sister schools in the same district. By the beginning of April, 1974, we had, to the best of our ability, fulfilled the requirements of the research sample.

Maintenance

The maintenance phase refers primarily to the period of data collection, two years in our case. In total length of time, it occupied the greatest proportion of the site relations program. However, it was not more costly, in strict dollar terms, than either of the other phases with which it is interdependent. The site maintenance phase consisted also of a variety of special site relations events and activities that we shall describe briefly.

Perhaps the key element of the entire site relations program was the inclusion of field representatives in the project. Field representatives

were persons who lived and worked in the regions in which the schools in our sample were located. By virture of their normal jobs, college professors, officials in Title III agencies, or state sponsored change agents, they came into contact with schools on a fairly regular basis. Each field representative had been active in promoting the innovation of interest and had been instrumental in sponsoring us in their locales. Six of these persons were contracted to perform many duties in behalf of the project.

The most obvious duty of the field representatives was the coordination and administration of data collection. Since the data collection activities were varied and lengthy--it required about two weeks of effort at each observation to collect data--this duty had to be carried out with grace and delicacy. Consequently, the field representatives planned the details of data collection with each school months in advance of the actual administration of instruments.

Of equal importance was the fact that the field representatives were liaisons between the research sites and ourselves. In this way, we were continuously informed of important changes in the nature of the sample and made alert to problems that our procedures created for the schools. That such problems were usually solved quickly was regarded, we believe, as an expression of our concern to follow through on our initial promises.

The field representatives were involved in another important site relations activity, protection of human subjects. Much of the research information touched upon potentially sensitive issues. Conceivably certain records of activities and attitudes could be used by school administrators against staff members. Thus, we were obliged to take precautions to safe-

guard teachers and, in some instances, administrators from such risks. Prior to each data collection, therefore, individuals were asked to give their informed consent to participate. They were told of the risks they might run and of the ways in which their anonymity would be secured. They were told that they could withdraw from any part of the study at any point.

These activities were conducted by the field representatives. Most instruments were administered by the field representatives who held no formal authority over the participants. In this fashion we hoped to avoid giving the impression that participants were compelled to participate, as might have been the case if a school district official were to conduct the data collections. Moreover, all instruments were returned directly to the field representatives. In this fashion, we hoped to reduce any suspicion that school officials might somehow inspect teacher responses to potentially sensitive items. Finally schools received the same modest financial remuneration irrespective of the rate at which they returned useable information.

Another important feature of the site maintenance phase was the series of site visits. Site visits refer to the practice of members of the research team spending a day or part of a day at each school. We made three visits during the two years of data collection.

The benefits of site visits were recorded on two ledgers. On the one hand visits by the research staff brought them into personal contact with persons and events we would otherwise know only from scattered bits of data. To see the context in which the phenomena of interest occurred proved helpful in evaluating and interpreting the research data. On the other hand, the

site visits were rather informal affairs designed to have school personnel and the research staff members become better acquainted. From these encounters there often grew a genuine affinity among representatives of the two groups.

The site visits were used in conjunction with yet another feature of the maintenance phase, feed-back. During each round of visits, time was set aside for the visitors to make somewhat formal reports on the conduct and preliminary findings of the project. Usually such presentations were given to representatives from all the schools in a region. Often this occurred in the evening and was occasioned by a dinner or a social hour. Special care was given to the format and content of these presentations. We wished neither to affect the very data that we were collecting nor to convey sentiments that could be interpreted as favoring one type of school over the other. Yet, we were convinced, in part by the requests of the schools, that reports of findings would be favorably received.

Various other special events occurred during the site maintenance phase, but we will not say very much about them here. In general they seemed to be insignificant. The schools ignored them, and they became, as a result, unduly burdensome on the project staff. For example, we attempted an occasional paper series. In these we would highlight educational issues of seeming generic importance but which had little or nothing to do with our project. During site visits copies of these papers could be seen in the deep recesses of forgotten corners of the faculty lounge.

The schools were paid $100 following each data collection. In some cases, this modest sum was most welcome. In many cases, it was regarded simply as a token. Often, it seems, the money aided a private, social cause.

Dissemination

Although dissemination of the interim findings occurred more or less continuously throughout the maintenance phase, we choose to call the final phase of site relations dissemination. This phase was quite distinct from the earlier phases in a few key ways. Because data collections were completed there was little incentive to keep the schools "in the fold." The project rapidly became out-of-touch with the schools. Since in this period interest naturally turned to data analysis and the preparation of research reports, the schools faded in the glow of new challenges. In short, it was a time when schools were most apt to be mistreated by the research team.

We devised various mechanisms to safeguard against these tendencies. A large part of the total project budget was set aside and administered separately for the purpose of dissemination. Three people were assigned major responsibility for the preparation of the final report to participants. Most importantly, a detailed plan for dissemination was worked out by all members of the project. The obligation to follow through on the promise of a useful final report to participants became a prevailing norm of the project. As a consequence, the more technical research goals were assigned lower priority for the time being.

It was our intent to prepare a final report to participants that they would find useful and that symbolized our respect for them. We believed we could enhance the utility of the report by using a plain and simple language that did not compromise the integrity of the research or its findings. We believed that its utility would be enhanced if we could provide familiar

references to which the key research concepts could be attached. Moreover, in the report we discussed the alternative organizational structures we studied in terms of their recorded impact on staff practices and attitudes in order to illustrate pertinent choices for educators.

We hoped to give the participants full access to the contents of the report. This entailed more than simply placing copies of the report in the mail. The field representatives were brought to project headquarters. During this time they advised us on the redesign of our current drafts. Moreover, they were given a fairly detailed account of our findings. Also during this time they agreed to make oral presentations of the report to each faculty in their region. Together we fashioned the general mode of presentation they would employ and developed techniques that we hoped would stimulate audience discussion of the contents of the report. We also made plans to prepare various protocols and audio-visual devices to be used during their presentation. When completed the reports were mailed to the field representatives who then made arrangements with each school to make a presentation to which, of course, attendance was voluntary.

Our desire to show our appreciation to the participants was also reflected in the technical excellence of the graphics used in the report--design features which have been accorded a national award. Great care was given to heighten the readability of the report through the judicious use of space, the careful selection of print, and the inclusion of a number of pleasing graphic displays.

Issues

One case, such as the one we have briefly described, does not lend itself fruitfully to more abstract generalizations. Rather a better understanding of what constitutes a sensible site relations program may arise when other projects also share their experiences. Comparing the few timely contributions about site relations (Baldridge, Deal, et al, 1973; Moser, N.D.; Paddock, 1977) with our own experiences,we see that several categories of events typically receive major attention. Subsequent reports might, therefore, attend to the potentially fruitful areas we discuss below.

Planning

Implicit in most discussion is that preparation for a program of site relations should begin almost as early as the preparation for the research proper. Moreover, the two activities should be planned in conjunction. In many cases there are formal requirements that make it necessary for the two activities to be planned interactively. For example, in almost every funded research, evaluation, development, and training project today, there are formal requirements that plans for protection of human subjects be approved before the project proposal will be reviewed for funding. Human subjects protection approval is based not only on the degree to which subjects are protected from risks related to actual data collection, but also considered are such issues as informed consent, the manner in which subjects are recruited, data security, and the nature of project reports including protecting individual anonymity and in some instances even group or class anonymity.

Even if human subjects clearance were not a fact of life early planning for site relations would still be required. The project's budget must include projected costs for site relations as well as research activities. Lest the site relations program be left short-handed or the research staff unduly overburdened, staffing must also be considered in the formative stages of the project. If specialists in site relations are to become part of a project's staff, then early care must be given to defining their roles and integrating them into the project proper. The research design poses contingencies for site relations. Concomitantly the design of a site relations program poses contingencies for the conduct of research. These points of contingency should be identified early in the formative stages of the overall project.

Staffing

It will be interesting to discover what, if any, special staff arrangements are made for site relations in various other research undertakings. Baldridge, Deal, et al (1973) describe alternative staffing arrangements revealed in their survey. In most large projects of which we are aware at least one member of the research team was assigned full-time responsibility for oversight of the site relations program. The magnitude of the research enterprise in these instances seemed to demand at least this much attention be given to site relations. In our project, additional staff, field representatives, were appended to the project. We repeat that there is much ambiguity surrounding such roles and special care has to be given to integrating site relations specialists into the project. Seemingly to the extent

that the site relations and research specialists collaborate in designing both the research and site relations designs, the chances of smooth working relationships are increased and the integrity of both endeavors is heightened.

Access

The reasons why schools agree to participate in a project are unconfirmed. Baldridge, Deal, et al, (1973), describe six linking strategies that correspond roughly to different sorts of undertakings such as research, development, evaluation, and training. Some of these strategies (for example, an exchange system wherein the costs of participation are offset by the benefits, financial or otherwise) were part of our strategy. Moser (N.D.) calls this a consumer strategy. Baldridge, Deal, et al (1973) and Moser (N.D.) also describe paths of political influence that a project might travel in order to gain access to sites. Our term, sponsorship, is quite analagous to a political strategy of site access. Moser gives the outlines of what he calls after Guba and Clark a "configurational perspective." In this he suggests many of the reasons why schools may agree or may not agree to participate in a research project. These reasons may vary according to the organizational status of different actors--principals and teachers participate for different reasons--and access strategies must be sensitive to these patterned variations.

Formalization

Various authors point to the importance of reaching formal, that is written and signed, agreements to cover the rights and obligations of both

parties. The advantages of formalization are many. Each party is given equal, if only quasi-legal, status in the arrangement. This may reduce the often observed tendencies of researchers to act in a superior manner and of participants to be either overly compliant or overly aggrevated by the research arrangements. Formal arrangements define obligations which the research team is bound to fulfill. According to some reports failure to follow through on various obligations has given educational research an unsavory reputation among school personnel.

However, it is not always clear with whom a project should enter into formal agreement. In our case, cooperative agreements were enacted between individual schools and the research project. In some instances, the principal exercised discretion in committing the school to a long-term arrangement. Elsewhere, the contract was approved by district officials, even the school board, before it was signed by the school principal. In other cases, the teaching faculty was asked for its approval before the agreement was signed. We cannot say if these different patterns made any difference to the research findings. But, during the period of negotiations we were quite sensitive to variations in the manner in which approval was gained and fearful of differential impacts on the study as a result (Argyris, 1968).

Protection of Human Subjects

Formalization extended to each individual participant in the project. Prior to each data collection, subjects were given an explanation of the project, including the instruments that would be used, the risks of parti-

cipation and various safeguards we employed. Ultimately, they had the option to participate. Their choice to participate was certified by a signature on a form that was returned with the instrument in question. Generally, participants responded favorably to the care devoted to such details. Nevertheless, the constant repetition of these procedures seemed to some to be needless or ritualistic. Moreover, in a number of instances, we observed that participants had little or no appreciation of the precautions that were being exercised. Because there is widespread controversy about the effects of employing human subjects protection procedures, it would be useful to have more reports of actual experience with implementing these procedures.

Maintaining Participation

In a project of some duration that requires repeated data collection, maintaining a high level of subject participation becomes problemmatic, or so it would seem. Yet, in our case, the initial data collection proved to be the most traumatic for participants. The subsequent data collections were attended by much less apprehension. With each passing wave, there were fewer reports of crises, major or minor. This may have been due to improvements in the data collection procedures, or to the ability of respondents to place unique events into perspective, or to the various site relations strategies that we have described. Whatever the reasons, the quantity and quality of information returned to the project did not seem to diminish over the two years of data collection.

Several issues did arise for which we were quite unprepared. We shall discuss them briefly. Although we knew better, we were surprised by the

amount of staff turnover in the schools we studied. From a logistical perspective, this meant new personnel had to be introduced to the project constantly. In a few cases new principals were brought into the sample. Surprisingly staff turnover, even at the administrative level, seemed not to affect the willingness of schools to participate. The project's field representatives were most helpful in this regard. In the case of one new principal, we learned,that a condition of employment was to continue to participate in our project.

Even more unusual cases had to do with the withdrawal of schools from the sample. One school withdrew from participation midway through the initial data collection. This posed no particular problem. However, following the first data collection we found that certain of the so-called experimental schools had, indeed, installed the innovation in advance of the schedule required by the research design. They and their matched control schools did not permit evaluation of the various hypotheses that were being tested. Among project staff there arose the sentiment to discontinue their participation. The subsequent discussion and reaction to this notion may be illuminating.

The technical and financial arguments against retaining certain "non-fit" schools in the sample were quite strong. However, project staff members also realized that for whatever the reasons many faculties seemed to look forward to participating in the project. It would seem unfair, even unethical, to ask some to discontinue for reasons beyond their control. Moreover, although participants were generally unaware of the identity of other schools

in the sample, there existed lines of communication whereby the "shabby" treatment of one school might be reported to others.

We approached the implicated schools with a fairly complex proposal by which the costs of their withdrawal might be offset by certain compensations. To make a (year) long story short, suffice it to say that their willingness to discontinue participation was quite pronounced. Only after several rounds of negotiations were we able to come to an agreeable solution.

We have no ready explanation as to why schools continued to participate for the long haul. More careful analysis of this phenomenon may prove helpful to research project and may reveal, as well, a rather hopeful attitude of public school personnel about educational research,even of the more obscure varieties.

Dissemination

As we have pointed out,in our project dissemination of research findings to the participating schools occurred more-or-less continuously. Findings of previous research were included in the proposals we presented to schools in the development phase. During site visits we reported our interim findings. A year after the final data collection we conducted a rather ambitious and expensive dissemination activity based upon our overall findings. It seemed clear to us that many faculty members desired such dissemination activities, or else we would have discontinued them.

However, it never seemed clear exactly why dissemination was so highly valued. During the various reports of project findings, participants seemed quite indifferent either to the substance of the reports or the modes of

presentation. The final research report, for example, took nearly a year to prepare and great care was given to details that we felt would enhance the attractiveness and utility of the report. Although this effort won considerable praise from our colleagues, the chief recipients seemed to be as indifferent as ever.

We speculate that much of the indifference that participants registered was prompted by the level at which data were aggregated and reported. Experimental schools were always compared in the aggregate to control schools. Participants seemed to want information about their own school, which by virtue of our human subjects protection procedures and the small size of the research staff we were unable to provide.*

We can agree, on the basis of our own experience, that dissemination, or feedback as it is commonly called, is important to the site relations program. However, its importance may reside in the possibility that dissemination indicates a willingness to follow through on previously arranged obligations more than on any direct benefit registered on those who receive them.

Other than Dawes' (1972) gentle reminder to interact with subjects in ordinary ways even in the conduct of research, we have no particular principle of site relations that we wish to promote. Our efforts were

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*One school which we earnestly sought to include in the sample agreed to participate on the condition that it would receive a final report specific to their own school. This was done. In contrast to reports based on highly aggregated data, this report sparked considerable interest. However, from the project's point of view, financial costs and problems of human subjects clearance make this a very dubious strategy to conduct on a large scale.

undertaken with the belief that site relations in educational research is usually an embarrassment to the research team and a bane to the participants. We were determined to do a proper job. Now as then, however, we have no clear understanding of a proper job of site relations. We think better understanding will emerge with a greater exchange of information.

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